

# THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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From a woodcut by H. Miller

## The Birthday of the Flag

By Leah Adkinson Kazmark

**A** FLAG can have a birthday just like a person. The fourteenth day of June is the birthday of the American standard and this year it celebrates with 153 candles on its cake.

American young people are very proud of the Stars and Stripes this birthday. Our nation has been active in working for world peace and taken its place at the Disarmament Conference. Here, with other great nations, our represen-

tatives studied how war and the machinery that war uses might be best done away with. This was a step in bringing about the brotherhood of man which Jesus taught by the shores of Galilee so long ago.

The Stars and Stripes is now the oldest standard in the world. While America is a young nation, the older ones of the world's big family have altered their emblems of late years.

America, too, is the only country where the government has set aside one day to honor especially the flag.

The first salute of a foreign nation was given our flag by our good neighbor, France. When John Paul Jones sailed to that country in 1778 in his tiny vessel, *The Ranger*, the French guard fired in salute of the new flag. Tradition tells that honor goes to this same young man for first carrying the flag on the water. It was on the Schuylkill River in southeastern Pennsylvania. Shortly after the news went about that America had a flag, thirteen stars in a circle and thirteen stripes, some ladies decided to make one. They cut and basted and sewed. Soon it was finished. They presented it to young Jones who at once secured a rowboat, placed the flag upon a standard at one end and went rowing up and down to see how it looked flying in the breeze. The people gathered on the shore. They cheered as the new emblem of the Republic went by. That was the first public party of the flag.

The tiny shop of Betsy Ross in Philadelphia, where she made the first flag for Congress to see, is today a public shrine. Here travelers gather from all over America to see the humble little front room where Madam Ross cut the stars and stripes and sewed them together with nimble fingers by the light of her candle. In the city cemetery she lies buried and true are the words of a modern poet:

"The simple stone of Betsy Ross  
Is covered now with mould and moss,  
But still her deathless banner flies  
And keeps the color of the skies."

The flag of Betsy Ross is flying still and it flies all about the world. This country has an embassy in all foreign countries. Over each of these buildings flies the Stars and Stripes, so that the sun never goes down upon the standard of America. In England it flies all the year by the ancestral home of the English Washingtons, Sulgrave Manor. This is an old Manor House now restored in the hope that peace will always be maintained between England and America. France flies our flag in honor of her



good Colonial friend, Franklin. Poland keeps our Fourth of July in honor of the land she has always loved. On that date the American flag flies with that of Poland, two lands who have so long believed in the rights of men.

So the whole world honors the birthday of America's emblem.

"Your flag and my flag,  
And how it floats today,  
In your land and my land  
And half a world away!"

## King: The White Peacock

By Ruth Hope

THE hotel where Agnes and Edgar were stopping with their parents stood on the top of a cliff overlooking the blue waters of the Bay of Naples. The white houses of Sorrento clustered in the background, while behind rose green hills dotted with villages.

Agnes was leaning over the railing of a veranda trying to grasp a spray of pale yellow tea-roses when Edgar came out, his eyes shining.

"I say, Agnes, have you seen the peacocks?"

"No, where are they?"

"In the garden, next door. Watch now. See that fellow on the top of the grape-trellis. Isn't he a beauty?"

Just below, a white peacock was preening his snowy feathers, turning a head crowned with a tuft from side to side.

"He's seen us!" cried Edgar, "and wants to show off. Isn't that some sight?"

Agnes breathed quickly in excitement. She'd seen peacocks before, gorgeous creatures with bronze-blue-green feathers, but never one like this kingly bird.

"I didn't know they were ever white, Edgar."

"Very rarely. He must be worth a lot."

"And, oh, look! Here come two others, the ordinary kind."

With an almost laughable dignity, two peacocks appeared on the trellis, trailing their tails and parading up and down, evidently fully aware, as was the white one, of the American boy and girl on the terrace above them, gazing down admiringly.

"They pretend not to see the white peacock," chuckled Edgar.

Giovanni, the youngest waiter, balancing a loaded tray on his hand, spoke now.

"The princess, she love her peacocks, but she like ze white one ze best. He come from Persia an' cost—" he snapped the fingers of his free hand in the air to show what a lot. "Only two white peacocks in all Italy. One in Rome, one here."

"A princess!" said Agnes. "What kind?"

"Russian, Signorina."

## Inspiration

By RUTH M. GRIFFITH

When you see flags  
A-floating out,  
What does your heart  
Whisper about?

Mine says, "Be loyal,  
Courageous, true;  
There are great things  
For you to do."

The white peacock raised his head and perked it saucily at Agnes, then very slowly opened his tail into a wide, lacy fan, through which the sunlight flickered.

"*Com' e bello!*" exclaimed Giovanni, with the instinctive love of beauty possessed by all Italians. "But zat peacock, Signorina, he no like to stay in garden. He run away if gate open, make princess much—wot you say?"

"Trouble," suggested Edgar.

"Two times, already, he get out."

Not to be outdone by their white brother from Persia, the two other peacocks spread their tails.

"If we're going down to the beach we'd better hurry," suggested Edgar.

Reluctantly, Agnes followed.

"You wouldn't think that the white peacock would want to run away from that perfectly lovely garden," she said, walking through the orange grove on the sea-front of the hotel.

Edgar picked a couple of the golden balls which they ate as they went down a stone stair-case cut in the brown rocks. The steps twisted and turned; here and there were caves.

"A nice place for pirates," suggested Edgar. "Agnes, I expect that people have been going up and down here for a thousand years."

"Maybe," answered Agnes, her mind still on that white peacock.

Across the bay rose the pink and yellow houses of the large city of Naples. The island of Capri showed green as one of the emeralds which the Emperor Tiberius loved twenty centuries before when he built a villa on the rocks of Capri.

On the right was Vesuvius, a tiny spiral of smoke drifting idly away from the flattened summit of a volcano which could throw out flaming lava when it got excited. At the foot of the mountain lay the ancient ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

The bath over, Agnes and Edgar were ready for the climb up the steps.

"They look dreadfully long," said Agnes.

"Two hundred feet of them," Edgar replied, "but we'll get to the top if we keep going, a step at a time."

"Say, what do you know about that!"

"It's the white peacock, Edgar. He's run away again. What shall we do?"

"Hurry up to the hotel and tell somebody."

"It will take us a good while. And maybe by the time the princess knows that her pet is gone, he will fall off. Oh! The beautiful bird."

Agnes and Edgar had climbed about one-third of the twisting flight of steps cut in the rocks and had stopped to rest on a bench conveniently placed in front of an arched opening festooned with jasmine blossoms. The cliff on which a summer-house stood at the end of the property belonging to the Russian princess was much steeper than the one leading to the beach from the hotel.

Coming down these jagged rocks in a most dignified manner, lifting his feet daintily, came his royal highness, the white peacock from Persia.

"Hey, there, go back!" cried Edgar.

The bird paused, standing perilously on one foot, while he gazed calmly at the American boy.

Agnes laughed.

"He—he winked at me, Edgar, He's having the time of his life, but—we must catch him some way."

"I don't see how it's to be done. Surely somebody down on the beach will see him. I tell you, Agnes, I'll run down and—"

The peacock, seeing that he was the center of a scene, raised his fan-like, lacy tail. Then he lowered his feathers and turned away, climbing to a pinnacle where he stood, motionless, as if carved out of glittering Carrara marble.

"There isn't time!" cried Agnes. "You can climb and so can I. Let's head him off."

For an instant, Agnes grew giddy. Fifty feet of clear precipice below her, a hundred and fifty feet of jagged rocks above her. Fortunately, here and there were hardy bushes and foot-holds, too, worn by storm and time.

What kind of a reception was that peacock going to give them when they reached him? This thought occurred suddenly to Edgar.

"You'd better go back, Agnes," he shouted. "I'll manage him."

"Indeed, I'm not going back," answered Agnes.

The peacock settled himself in a crevice and waited, apparently with some curiosity, to see what Edgar and Agnes proposed doing.

From the beach came loud shouts which they could not understand.

"Somebody has seen us," said Agnes, holding fast to a bush.

The peacock began to move, just as they got close to him. He pecked at Agnes's silk sleeve and his keen beady eyes examined her face.

"The bananas, Edgar. Maybe he likes them."

Edgar balanced on a projecting bit of stone and peeled the skin from a



banana brought for lunch, which they had forgotten to eat.

The peacock turned its eyes to the banana and stretched his long neck.

"The job is done," said Edgar, triumphantly.

Pulling herself up, Agnes squeezed into a corner beside the peacock, now contentedly pecking at the fruit held by Edgar.

"Now, we're friends," said Agnes. "Oh, if I could have only one of his lovely tail-feathers, I'd take it home to show the girls."

"Small chance."

Silently, obeying signs from a couple of ragged boys on the beach, two men were coming down the rocks from the summer-house. They drew a rope gently around the peacock, and addressed him in language which did not sound complimentary.

The peacock made no objection to being taken home after his little excursion out into the world, but took a big beakful of banana with him to enjoy during his ignominious progress upward.

"They want us to come, too," Edgar said.

"Into the princess's garden!"

Agnes sighed happily. What a wonderful adventure!

In a short time, they were under great ilex trees with tiny dark leaves. Fountains played merrily and statues gleamed, while roses nodded to the two Americans and lilies shed fragrance for their special benefit as they followed the peacock toward his favorite trellis where his two bronze-green-blue companions awaited him, shaking their heads at the run-away.

"See how ashamed he is," a pleasant voice said near them. "He will not spread his tail for our benefit."

"How can I thank you for saving my peacock, my dears?" said the princess, taking Agnes's hands.

"We—we didn't do much," Agnes quavered; she had never talked to a princess before. "I think the banana did it."

"But you took the banana to him. I don't know what to do with that bird. He doesn't want to stay at home."

"In such a lovely garden?"

The princess smiled at Agnes.

"You are Americans?"

"Yes," answered Edgar.

"Is there anything you'd like?"

"Agnes wants a feather, very much." Edgar hesitated a little.

"It is so very little—but if you'd like one—"

The princess spoke to one of the men, who went away, returning soon with a long white feather.

"It is one that my white peacock dropped. We call him 'King' because he came from Persia and is a royal bird."

"Isn't she a dear," said Agnes, when they were going out of the great iron

gates. "Nobody would think that she was a princess."

"Pooh!" answered Edgar, "A princess is no better than anybody else. In America, we don't have 'em an' we're just as happy."

"That's so," answered Agnes, gently smoothing the white feather of the royal bird from Persia.

## A Word a Day

By ETHEL M. WHEELER

The long summer vacation loomed ahead most enticingly. No more lessons for ages! Harvey came whistling home that last day and flung his pile of books into a far corner of the attic.

Beth heard the thump and ran up to see what could be the matter.

"Nothing is the matter!" said Harvey almost crossly. "I'm just through with *learning* for two whole months—"

"Well, I'm not," answered his sister briskly. "Wait until you hear what we've decided to do this summer—"

"Who's *we*?" enquired Harvey inelegantly, as he turned to descend the attic stairs.

"The Blair twins, cousin Jim, Elsa, myself—and—perhaps you!"

"Huh," said Harvey unimpressed.



## Mexico's Outdoor Library

By G. F. PAUL

Visitors to Chapultepec Park in Mexico City are delightfully surprised to find at the Don Quixote Fountain an outdoor library of many volumes including the works of Cervantes, Dante, Plutarch, Homer, Goethe, Poe, Tolstoi, and others, all in Spanish. The library is free to the public and is well patronized.

Eighty-four small tiles set into the backs of the seats show scenes in the life of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

"Well, I'm in a hurry now. Going fishing with Bob. See you later, Beth—"

"Tell Bob to come to our meeting tomorrow at three!" called Beth. "Maybe he'll like our idea, too—"

"All right—" and Harvey clattered away into the sunshine.

The following afternoon seven young people sat under the old oak on the lawn. Harvey and Bob were a trifle impatient, but they were somewhat curious, also.

"Now, of course, our 'idea' will have to be voted upon," began Beth. "If the majority are against it the 'word a day' plan shall never commence—"

"You're so mysterious, Sis!" cried Harvey. "What is your idea, anyway? How can we vote it—"

Bob hushed him by starting a scuffle, and when—after some teasing—all was quiet again, Beth continued:

"The plan is that each of us shall choose a book to read during vacation—a story of travel, biography, nature-study or whatever appeals to the individual—and find at least *one difficult word* a day which is to be thoroughly looked up, meaning, origin (if possible), synonyms, antonyms, the spelling learned and anything interesting about it memorized or jotted down—"

"Whew!" groaned Harvey as he pretended to be overcome with faintness, "do you realize that summer *holidays* have commenced? What an *idea*, to be sure, eh Bob?"

"Not bad at that!" cried Bob, to Harvey's dismay. "My vocabulary could stand improvement. Yours, too, you lazy fellow!"

"Oh well, consider that I've voted for the plan—" sighed Harvey wiping imaginary tears away. "Excellent idea, of course. Trust Beth to think of something!"

"All in favor say 'aye,'" requested Beth, and a wild whoop rent the air. "That's enough! Now, each word looked up must be jotted down, and brought to our weekly meeting, where we shall compare notes. Just think, there are seven of us, six new words each week for two months! We'll certainly have a *variety* of word knowledge when school opens!"

"Sounds stupendous," someone sighed. "Let us at least try out this bright idea for one week. If we do not like it then we can stop—"

"I forgot to say that after our 'word struggle' there are to be games or a tramp in the woods, perhaps a picnic or a fishing party—"

"Now I *am* for the 'idea'!" cried Harvey. "Let us start at once—by going fishing—"

"You boys go ahead," advised Beth. "Elsa, Marie and I will bring along a lunch later. . . . Those boys!" she sighed as the four rushed off, "I'll pin them down to a choice of books before the day is over."



# THE BEACON CLUB

## The Editor's Post Box

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Dear B. C. Members:

With this number of our paper we say good-bye for the summer. As we go our various ways, shall we take with us as a guide this little poem by Mary S. Edgar which is reprinted from the bulletin of All Souls' Church School, Washington, D. C.?

### THE UPWARD ROAD

I will follow the upward road today,  
I will keep my face to the light,  
I will think high thoughts as I go my way,  
I will do what I know is right.  
I will look for the flowers by the side of the road,  
I will laugh and love and be strong;  
I will try to lighten another's load  
This day, as I fare along.

A happy, helpful summer to all our readers!

THE EDITOR.

2003 ELEVENTH ST.,  
MOLINE, ILL.

Dear Editor: I have read the letters in *The Beacon* every Sunday. I am nine years old, and am in the fifth grade. My Sunday-school teacher is Miss Dufva. Our superintendent is Mrs. Bradley.

Yours truly,  
NORMAN KENT.



Two little owls sat in a tree,  
Looking as wise as wise could be.  
Said one to the other,  
"Tis very clear,  
The less we speak, the more we hear."

MARIE-ANNE JORDAN.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

GREAT RD.,  
BEDFORD, MASS.

Dear Editor: I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear the pin. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and enjoy it. I go to the Unitarian church in Bedford. The superintendent of our Sunday school is Miss Lane and my Sunday-school teacher's name is Miss Thompson. I am 13 years old and I am in the seventh grade in the Bedford Junior High School.

Yours truly,  
ELIZABETH PFEIFFER.

106 SILVER LAKE RD.,  
STATEN ISLAND, N. Y.

Dear Editor: I should very much like to join the Beacon Club and wear its pin. I am 13 years old and am in the eighth grade of P. S. 45, Richmond, L. I.

My Sunday-school teacher is Miss Smith and the minister is the Rev. Dr. Mott. We enjoy reading our *Beacons* every Sunday. We all like the puzzles, especially the pictures to find the mistakes in.

Yours truly,  
FLORENCE BONNEY.

Other new members of our Club are John Clark, Billie Adams, Theron Corliss, Junior Soule, and Theodore Davis, Yarmouth, Maine; Lois Holland, Cohasset, Mass., Richard Wilson, Eastondale, Mass., Warren Bishop Anderson and Albert Tebbetts, Woburn, Mass.

## Observations

By ANGELA S. CRISPIN

Yesterday we heard someone say:  
"Nothing important happened today."

Yet we watched a linnet building his nest;

Ants clearing a hole,—do they never rest?

A spider was weaving such fairy lace  
We scarce dared breathe, lest she drop from her place.

From the palm tree an oriole stripped some thread,

And fastened her nest to the leaf overhead;

A swift darting carp, in the waters cold,  
Changed his black velvet jacket for one of rich gold.

Did our ears play us false? Surely no one would say

"Nothing important happened today!"

## Puzzlers

### Who Am I?

By H. O. SPELMAN

My skin is dark, inside I'm white,  
Six letters has my name;  
And every letter is a word,  
Now guess me like a game.  
My first is green, grows in a pod,  
My next, like me, is round;  
My third you pour from out a pot,  
My next in "art" is found;  
My fifth you have at supper time,  
My last in pain one cries;  
You eat me, but before you do  
You cut out all my eyes.

### Anagram Couplet

Meco thorf toin het glith fo shintg,  
Elt truean eb ruoy reachet.

W. W.

### Answers to Puzzles in No. 34

Easy Enigma.—Knut Rockne.

Twisted Names of Biblical Places.—

1. Sidon. 2. Tyre. 3. Bethlehem. 4. Jerusalem. 5. Nineveh. 6. Babylon. 7. Jericho. 8. Dead Sea. 9. Reuben.

Since the extract of Mr. P. H. Hazard's letter was published in our issue of May 24, we have received a letter from Christine McKean, one of our Club members in West Roxbury, Mass., who says: "A few Sundays ago one of the puzzles was to find as many words as possible in the word *automobile*. Mother and I tried it today. She got 111; I got 75, ten of which she did not get. I am sending you a list of them." So honors are tied between Mr. Hazard and Mrs. McKean, but the McKean family has the highest score, with a total of 121 words.—Ed.

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MARIE W. JOHNSON, Editor

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